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ABSTRACT

This paper, based on a book on the assessment of minority students, is a critical review of the research done heretofore on intelligence testing. It deals with such issues as: the social criticism of testing through numerous lawsuits, court rulings, and in the positions taken by the Association of Black Psychologists and the American Personnel and Guidance Association; the use of IQ tests for grouping purposes; experiments related to the test environment; the self-fulfilling prophecy; and the effects of language differences on test results. It is held that the present trend points toward an expansion and elaboration of psychometrics rather than an abolition of objective tests. Among the trends are: a recognition of the need to train the users of tests to ensure that test scores are not misinterpreted and also train them in the potentialities of a variety of errors of interpretation due to technical and psychological factors which contaminate test results; a focus on measures of environment to bolster and supplement the scores from traditional tests; a call for a "pluralistic sociocultural" perspective on the testing of minorities; the development of new measures consistent with the special language characteristics of the minorities; and, an emphasis on description and prescription rather than on selection and prediction in order to facilitate equal educational opportunities. (Author/RJ)

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Racial Discrimination through Mental Testing: A Social Critic's Point of View

by Ronald J. Samuda

Introduction

The fact that blacks score significantly lower than whites on tests of mental ability has been well documented. Several studies, ranging over the past half century, have repeatedly demonstrated that the mean score of blacks falls at one standard deviation below the mean score of whites, especially on tests which purport to measure levels of intellectual functioning. It was not the statement of those facts that angered minorities, for they have been well known to psychologists, psychometricians, geneticists, and sociologists since the introduction of mass objective-type testing during the First World War.

It was the interpretation placed on the differences between the black and white averages and the comparative distribution of scores which led to the more recent embattled controversy. For the Coleman Report (1966) had, contrary to expectations, failed to uncover any evidence that differences in IQ scores and in test results of basic academic achievement between blacks and whites were significantly related to differences in the physical facilities, curricula, and teacher characteristics of the schools. Coleman and his associates arrived at the surprising conclusion, based on careful study, that the educational provisions throughout the country were not all that different for the two ethnic groups. If the cause could not be found in the educational environment, where else, then, could it lie? If the lead dictated by nurture proved to be a dead end, why not try nature? And so, the pendulum swung. Instead of environmental factors, some highly publicized papers (Jensen, 1969; Herrnstein, 1971) argued for heredity and genetic endowment as the preponderant determinant in explaining the consistent differences in obtained means between test results of blacks and whites.

To say that blacks score lower than whites because they are enslaved by genetic inferiority, or because they are victims of social, economic, and cultural deprivation, which a biased testing system helps to aggravate, is not new. Indeed, the part played by heredity, on the one hand, and the environment, on the other hand, in the test performance of black children has been investigated for a number of years. Long before Shuey (1958 and 1966) and Dreger and Miller (1960), attempts were made at compiling the existing studies of black test performance. Among the major reviewers, there were those who, like

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This paper is based on a book by the same author on the assessment of minority students, to be published by Dodd Mead in January 1975.

Pintner (1931), interpreted blacks' lower scores as a sign of racial inferiority, and those who, to the contrary, maintained that these differences were due to the influence of nurture and selection. In the nature versus nurture debate, Peterson (1932) reconciled both positions by recognizing that the environment as well as the race accounted for the differences between blacks' and whites' scores. Among the "equalitarian-environmentalists" —to use Shockley's term—Canady (1946) concerned himself with the problem that since tests of mental abilities had been standardized, almost without exception, on samples of white subjects, they could not be regarded as adequate measures for comparing the two groups. In his pioneer work on test bias, Klineberg (1935) found that various factors—selective migration, socioeconomic status, language, education, motivation, speed—affected to a lesser or greater degree and independently or simultaneously the scores of black children. Subsequently, his review of the literature in 1944 and North's, in 1957, led to the conclusion that there seemed to be no genetic basis for racial differences in intelligence.

It is undeniable that one had to wait until Shuey's *The Testing of Negro Intelligence*, first published in 1958 and later revised in 1966, in order to get a complete and thorough review of the intelligence test scores and studies of blacks. Her efforts command respect — over 500 studies covering a period of 50 years, drawing from books, articles, published and unpublished monographs, theses and dissertations, and using 81 different tests of intellectual ability.

The fundamental issue of the testing controversy has been well expressed by Roger Lennon at the 1969 Invitational Conference on Measurement in Education. "There is a deep-seated conviction," Lennon says, "that the performance of poor black, Puerto Rican, Mexican-American or just poverty-stricken examinees on these tests will be relatively poor; that because of this poor performance, inferences will be made as to the ability of these examinees, which inferences will lead to treatment either in school or on jobs that will in effect constitute a denial of opportunity" (p.42). Basically, one can say that the issue has remained the same over the years; yet, it seems that the Sixties and early Seventies have raised a new concern. As Lennon remarks in the above-cited address:

> The discussion has moved off the pages of educational and psychological journals onto the pages of mass media. Its forum has moved from the classroom and the psychological laboratory to City Hall and the courtroom. The tone of the discourse has become strident and emotional. The matter of bias and relevancy of test results has become political and central to a great many other concerns in the entire civil rights movement (p. 43).

The debate concerning standardized tests, and especially the interpretations placed on the results or scores of minorities, has intensified in recent years. The public has been alerted to the social, economic, educational, and psychological implications of testing which preserves the status quo and relegates black and other minorities to an inferior status in the society at large. A cadre of black, Hispanic-American, and other minority social scientists has spearheaded the attack on the testing industry and many eminent non-minority psychologists, sociologists, and educators, have joined the ranks of those who claim that testing serves a gatekeeping function to keep poor people poor and minorities at the bottom of the social scale. The implications and consequences of testing are far-reaching in the areas of education, especially higher education, in industry and employment. Testing is seen by many as the chief element in retarding the social mobility of minorities and in blocking the path for the poor, the black and other minorities to share in the educational opportunities, and by extension, in the goods of society.

So far, relatively unopposed and unchallenged in its selective and censoring function, the testing industry has been subjected to a national wave of disenchantment, skepticism and hostility as evidenced in the numerous lawsuits, court rulings and in the positions taken by the Association of Black Psychologists and the American Personnel and Guidance Association.

A Social Criticism of Testing

The position of the Association of Black Psychologists concerning the use of intellectual ability tests as they currently exist with black children became manifest when, in 1968, the

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association called for a moratorium on testing which was to remain in effect until it was deemed that appropriate tests had been developed. Such a stand was more recently reaffirmed by the Bay Area Association of Black Psychologists in the deposition they gave in connection with the case of *Larry P. et al v. Wilson Riles et al* (1972) in California. The deposition stated as follows:

> We, as members and representatives of the Bay Area Association of Black Psychologists strongly affirm that the ability and intelligence tests which are part of the set of criteria mandated by the State Department of Education are inappropriate and inadequate techniques. They are based on white, middle-class norms, values and experiences and hence are culturally biased against black children . . . It is thus imperative that we stop whatever enterprise that victimizes, oppresses and denies the full realization of black children's potential. In conclusion, we the members and representatives of the Bay Area Association of Black Psychologists reiterate our unequivocal stand and call for an immediate moratorium on the use of the current tests of intellectual ability in use in the State of California.

Subsequent to the 1968 call for a moratorium on testing, on March 25, 1970, the Senate of the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA) issued the following declaration:

> BE IT RESOLVED: That the American Personnel and Guidance Association through the Association for Measurement and Evaluation in Guidance develop and disseminate a position paper stating the limitations of group intelligence tests particularly and generally of standardized psychological educational and employment testing for low socioeconomic and underprivileged and non-white individuals in educational business and industrial environments.
>
> BE IT ALSO RESOLVED: That if demonstrable progress in clarifying and rectifying this situation cannot be achieved by this time next year, proposals for a moratorium on the use of group intelligence tests with these groups be presented.

Briefly stated, the position contained in the APGA resolution and the stand taken by the ABP with regard to the testing of minorities were the inevitable result of long and repeated abuse. As Robert Williams (1972) put it,

> The single, most salient conclusion is that traditional ability tests do systematically and consistently lead to assigning of improper and false labels on Black children, and, consequently to dehumanization and black intellectual genocide (p. 62).

The most common individually administered instruments used to measure the intelligence of children in the United States are the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales and the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC). A brief examination of both tests will reveal that their standardization samples included no black children. Among the various U.S. versions of the Binet-Simon Intelligence Scales, the Stanford revision emerged as the standard test of intelligence. First developed at Stanford University in 1916 and later revised in 1937 by Lewis Terman in collaboration with Maud Merrill, the Stanford-Binet was standardized on a sample comprising 3,184 boys and girls ranging from 1.5 to 18 years of age, drawing from eleven states and from urban and rural, high and low socioeconomic milieux. In *Measuring Intelligence* (1937), Terman and Merrill gave the following account of their standardization sample:

> In order to secure a representative group of school children, we chose them from different sections of the country, trying to avoid selective factors due to social and economic status. We chose average schools, and, as far as possible, recruited the pre-school group from younger brothers or sisters of children already in school. *All subjects are American-born and belong to the white race.* There has been no elimination of any particular nationality groups. (p.12)

One is, therefore, drawn to conclude, along with Kimble and Garmezy (1968) that "for this reason, the test proved to be of doubtful validity in evaluating the intelligence of foreign born or Negro children or for comparing their intelligence with that of native white children" (p. 508). A similar statement could be made in the case of the WISC for the manual put out by the Psychological Corporation in 1949 mentioned that only white children were examined. The chosen sample

included 2,200 children (1,100 boys and 1,100 girls) ranging from 5 to 15 years of age and carefully screened as far as geographical distribution and socioeconomic status were concerned. Among the researches cited by Dreger and Miller (1960) that used the WISC, Young and Bright (1954) and Caldwell (1954) when testing Southern black children encountered difficulties with the instrument and Dreger and Miller commented:

> Not surprisingly in view of its standardization, the WISC was found inappropriate for testing Southern Negro children from 10 to 13 years of age. (Young and Bright, 1954, p. 367). In this investigation the suggestion is also made that cultural bias results from using the WISC, standardized as it was on a white population (Caldwell, 1954, p. 368).

Whenever tests like the Stanford-Binet and the WISC are used with subjects whose characteristics do not correspond to the sample upon which those instruments were normed, it is logical to conclude that 1) such uses are invalid as measures of the intellectual level or potential of these subjects; 2) whenever such tests are administered to subjects significantly different from the white sample, scores are expected to be relatively low; and, 3) comparisons of scores from minority subjects with majority norms have questionable validity and utility.

It is not simply the inappropriate use of these tests which is at issue. It is the consequence of such use which is even more destructive. It is a fact that blacks, as a group, repeatedly and consistently score lower than whites—as low as minus one standard deviation — when administered tests such as the Stanford-Binet and the WISC. However, it is a sad reality that, as a result, classes for slow learners, the educable mentally retarded and the mentally retarded house a significantly greater proportion of black children than white children. Coleman's study (1966) showed that at the elementary and secondary level the school attended by the average black child contains a significantly greater proportion of children in the low tracks. Dunn (1968) noted that at the national level, minorities comprise more than 50 percent of the mentally retarded. The figures issued by the Bureau of Intergroup Relations of the State Department of Education for the State of California in the fall of 1970, reveal that whereas blacks who represent 9.1 percent of the total student population of the state account for 27.5 percent of the educable mentally retarded, they constitute only 2.5 percent of the mentally gifted. Such statistics undisputedly demonstrate the existence of racial imbalance in both the classes for the retarded and the classes for the gifted. In view of the fact that minority children continue to be tested by means of instruments with recognized deficiencies and inadequacies, it seems hardly possible that such an imbalance can ever be rectified under the existing circumstances.

In an eight-year study, conducted by Jane Mercer and her associates on mental retardation in Riverside, California, the effects of the indiscriminate and harmful use of IQ results have been well documented.

It should be mentioned that Mercer's research was confined to the California environment, particularly that of the southern region. Her studies, although pertinent to the conditions of blacks and other minorities, relate more specifically to children of Chicano Hispanic-American ethnicity. Thus, she consistently referred to the concept of Anglocentricity in the value orientation and standardizations of tests used to measure the potential of children having an essentially Spanish-speaking Mexican-American cultural background.[1]

Mercer's contention is that so-called intelligence tests, as presently used, are to a large extent, "Anglocentric"; that is, they mirror the standards, values, experiences of the white Anglo-Saxon middle-class. Consequently, the results of such tests inevitably affect, to a greater degree, persons from a different cultural background and from lower socioeconomic status as well as minority ethnic groups.

Among the various findings, the one which concerns us most importantly is that the public schools have been sending more children to MR classes than any of the other eight categories of organizations under consideration. Moreover, the criteria upon which selection was made in the public schools contacted included: 1) the almost exclusive reliance on IQ test scores and the almost total absence of medical diagnosis; 2) the utilization of a high cut-off score (IQ of 79 or below as compared to a recommended IQ of 69 or below) in order to draw the borderline

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[1] Mercer has done a remarkable and commendable job, and the reader is well advised to consult the following publications upon which the subsequent summary is based: *The Meaning of Mental Retardation, Sociocultural Factors in Labelling Mental Retardates, Institutionalized Anglocentrism. Labelling Mental Retardates in the Public Schools, The Labelling Process.* (See also bibliographic references at the end of this paper).

between mental retardates and normals; 3) the failure to take into account sociocultural factors when interpreting IQ test results.

The over-representation of Mexican-Americans and blacks in MR classes is astounding. Mercer quotes four-and-a-half times more Mexican-Americans and twice as many blacks as would be expected from their proportion in the population. Yet, whenever a "two-dimensional definition" of mental retardation is used, that is, one which not only considers the intellectual performance of individuals but also assesses their adaptive behavior (one's ability to cope with one's family, neighbourhood and community), and whenever IQ scores are interpreted with the knowledge that sociocultural factors contaminate them, then Mercer shows that the racial imbalance disappears and as a consequence, approximately 75 percent of the children placed in MR classes were mislabelled. In other words the Riverside studies revealed that the majority of those children had, in the language of the court, been wrongfully placed and suffered "irreparable harm and injury".

In the case of *Larry P. et al v. Wilson Riles et al* (1972) the plaintiffs, six black San Francisco elementary school children, charged the defendants, namely, the California State Department of Education and the San Francisco School District with having placed them in EMR classes on the basis of IQ tests alone. When the said plaintiffs were retested by certified black psychologists who used techniques taking into account the cultural and experiential background of the plaintiffs, all achieved above the cut off score of 75. Accordingly, U.S. District Judge Robert F. Peckham ordered that

> . . .defendants be restrained from placing black students in classes for the educable mentally retarded on the basis of criteria which place primary reliance on the results of IQ tests as they are currently administered, if the consequence of use of such criteria is racial imbalance in the composition of such classes.

In an unprecedented decision, the Court recognized the pervading cultural bias of the present tests, and the misplacement of and ensuing harm done to black children when tested by such measures. The Court's order was aimed at preventing future wrongful placement of black children in special classes, but it did not provide for the elimination of the effects of past discrimination, nor did it rule that the use of intelligence tests be suspended or that the EMR black children be released and retested for fairer placement. Yet, it cited the efforts of the New York City school system which banned group IQ tests and the Massachusetts school system (see Mass. Regulations Pertaining to Education of Certain Children, October 27, 1971) as alternative plans to be used, pending the development of appropriate tests.

Use of IQ Tests for Grouping

The foregoing discussion has been focused specifically on the use of individually administered tests of intelligence — the WISC, the Stanford-Binet commonly used to differentiate between "normal" subjects and those who might be classified as "educable mentally retarded" into special classes. Such types of tests require special training on the part of the test administrator, and special conditions of administration, which, despite the inadequacies cited by the members of the Association of Black Psychologists and the American Personnel and Guidance Association, and demonstrated in the research and recommendations of Jane Mercer (1971), may be less biased in terms of assessing the intelligence of minorities than that of standardized group tests.

New ERIC Thesaurus Edition

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Stanford University
Stanford, California 94305

The Exceptional Children Clearinghouse has changed its name and address. Its new name reflects an expansion of its scope to include education of gifted children:

ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children
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1920 Association Drive
Reston, Virginia 22091

Spawned by the same movement from which the original individual Binet-type of test sprang, group tests of mental ability were pioneered by Arthur Otis during the First World War. They represent a short-cut of the individual test and a means of administering the same test to large numbers of subjects at the same time. They are based on the same premise that it is possible, by administering a number of tasks to individuals, and by comparing performance with the average performance of the standardization sample, to estimate with some accuracy the index of intellectual functioning which in turn can predict likelihood of performance in school or on some set of academic or employment behaviors.

Group IQ tests, or tests of academic aptitude, as they are sometimes called, represent the basic instruments used by teachers and counselors for advising students, for placement in tracks, or for selection and promotion. They exert a powerful influence on the curricular organization and social stratification within schools. At the higher levels of education, they may become the deciding criteria for acceptance or rejection of applicants for college. They are generally published as omnibus paper-and-pencil packages comprising about 70 or 80 objective-type items, often arranged spirally in terms of difficulty level. Thus, when an IQ is quoted, it is given as a number which can be interpreted in terms of relative performance compared with the average or mean.

The purpose and general orientation of the group IQ test is to provide a measure of mental functioning paralleling the individually-administered Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale. It requires demonstration of logical reasoning, numerical ability, the manipulation of verbal concepts, and spatial reasoning.

What is significant for the purposes of this discussion is that research studies report differences in relative performance of different ethnic and socioeconomic groups on a variety of such group-administered tests yielding a global IQ score. It is on the basis of such comparisons that conclusions are drawn concerning the relative superiority or inferiority of one group to another. Such comparisons have led textbook writers in psychometrics to state that "contrary to indications in much of the popular literature, genetic factors definitely seem to have a strong relationship to IQ" (Stanley and Hopkins, 1972, p. 348)

The case of Hobson v. Hansen (1967) which attacked the tracking system then in use in the Washington, D.C., school system, posed a similar problem since the lower track or "basic track" constituted primarily of black children was placed there on the basis of a cut-off score of 75 on IQ tests. There too, cultural bias and invalidity of certain tests, as well as wrongful placement and irreparable harm and injury, were acknowledged and sanctioned. As Judge Wright put it:

> The evidence shows that the method by which track assignments are made depends essentially on standardized aptitude tests which, although given on a system-wide basis are completely inappropriate for use with a large segment of the student body. Because the tests are primarily standardized on and are relevant to a white middle-class group of students, they produce inaccurate and misleading test scores when given to lower class and Negro students. As a result, rather than being classified according to ability to learn, these students are in reality being classified according to their socio-economic or racial status, or--more precisely--according to environmental and psychological factors which have nothing to do with innate ability (p. 514).

If one accepts Mercer's findings, cited earlier, which show that 75 percent of the black and Mexican-American children enrolled in MR classes on the basis of IQ test results do not belong there, then one can say that "irreparable harm and injury" has been inflicted upon those children as Judge Peckham and Judge Wright admitted: "This court is thus of the view that for those students who are wrongfully placed in EMR classes, irreparable harm ensues" (Judge Peckham in Larry P. et al v. Wilson Riles et al, 1972).

The effects of grouping, especially for tracking, have been frequently disastrous. It is a well known fact that classes for low achievers offer a severely limited and low quality curriculum in which reading, spelling, and mathematics, are reduced to a minimum and the stimulation of a challenging program and higher achieving peers is lacking entirely. Yet, despite the criticisms of ability grouping (Goldberg, Passow, and Justman, 1966; Goodlad, 1966; Eash, 1961; Borg, 1964), school administrators in many parts of the country still continue to process children into homogeneous groups without making any serious attempt to change the teaching process, the strategies or the use of materials employed in the teaching-learning situation. The results of such grouping are particularly marked for minority pupils who, in the main, fall at the lower end of the IQ range and are, therefore, relegated to classes for slow learners. Yet, in their extensive and thorough research summary, Findlay and

Bryant (1970) concluded that: 1) separation into ability groups, *when all children are considered*, has no clear-cut positive or negative effect on average scholastic achievement; but 2) the slight trend towards improving the average achievement of high level groups is offset by a *substantial loss by average and low groups*. (Author's emphasis).

The fact is that the use and interpretation of IQ tests in the context of the "normal" elementary and secondary schools may result in the same sort of labelling as Mercer demonstrated in her Riverside study. Thus, from the standpoint of the disequalization of educational opportunity, IQ tests can, and often do, serve a sorting and segregating function. They can and are used at all levels of the educational process as a fail-safe mechanism to ensure that those who attend desegregated schools with mixed populations become resegregated within the curricular or tracking organization of the school. That is not to say that there is a deliberate and organized effort to keep blacks poor and inferior, although the operation and effect of endemic racism and social roles entrenched in the system of education conspire to retain the stigma of inferior status for blacks and to retard their social mobility in United States society in general. The use of the IQ test and particularly the interpretation of test results are increasingly seen as the barrier to change.

Increasingly, the evidence points to the conclusion that "racist claims of Caucasian superiority contribute to the Negro's lack of intellectual self-confidence. This insecurity is especially provoked by any direct comparison with white performance" (Pettigrew, 1964, p. 114). Educators and social psychologists, among other researchers, have demonstrated the reality of Pettigrew's assertion in a number of ways, such as: a) blacks will perform lower when the situation is perceived as hostile or threatening; b) blacks will gain when the tester is of the same race; c) the IQ test often functions as a self-fulfilling prophecy; d) scoring low on an intelligence test may be a rational response to perceived danger (in the case of talented blacks); e) the language and special tasks involved in an IQ test are relatively alien to the experiences of blacks and, therefore, do not measure even present functional ability.

Experiments Related to Test Environment

In a series of experimental situations, Irwin Katz and his associates have attempted to determine the effects of psychological factors in situations involving white peers and white and black authority figures on the intellectual productivity of black subjects (Katz, 1968). Of importance to the present discussion are the results of the findings as they relate to the differential conditions of the test-taking situations. In essence, these researchers have demonstrated that:

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a) The testing situation, when perceived as a hostile one (i.e. where the chances of success are low), impedes the performance of any individual, especially that of blacks in a white world (p. 279).

b) Motivation is highest when the chances of success are perceived as being slightly better than even (p. 279).

c) Blacks tend to rate themselves unrealistically lower than do whites in situations demanding intellectual productivity (Katz and Benjamin, 1960).

d) When working in biracial teams, blacks tend to be passively compliant and submissive unless they are forced to assert themselves (Katz et al, 1958; Katz and Benjamin, 1960; Katz and Cohen, 1962).

e) Blacks' performance increases when a relatively simple digit symbol code is disguised as an eye-hand coordination instrument and administered by a white examiner but decreases when the same task is presented as an IQ test and administered by a white examiner (Katz et al, 1965).

f) Blacks perform significantly better when they anticipate to be compared intellectually with blacks than with whites (Katz et al, 1964).

g) Blacks strongly inhibit their feelings of hostility toward whites, and as a result of the blocking of aggressive impulses, performance is impaired (p. 281-282).

Such findings are in keeping with a mounting body of evidence that demonstrate how psychological factors related to the test-taking situation, as well as social stereotypes and roles, seriously contaminate the results of IQ tests and, in the terms of Anastasi, may introduce a "moderator variable" or systematic error into test results. Such considerations call into question the predictive validity of a black lower-class person's IQ score, especially when derived from the traditional test situation.

The Self-fulfilling Prophecy

In interpreting the results of the interaction between teacher expectations in classroom situations and examiner race and attitudes in the test taking center, Katz (1964), Clark (1963), Kvaraceus (1965), Reisman (1962, 1965) have postulated or implied the possibility of negative or positive effects on pupil productivity as a function of teacher/examiner perceptions. It is what the pupil perceives the teacher or examiner to feel that is important in the test situation. Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968), in a widely publicized study, attempted to demonstrate the viability of the hypothesis that the perception and attitudes of the experimenter, examiner, or teacher may serve as self-fulfilling prophecies in their interaction with pupils. However, the authors' claims that experimenter-induced teacher expectations resulted in significant gains in students over a period of less than one year have been subjected to critical review in terms of the validity of their data (Snow, 1969; Thorndike, 1968). Furthermore, subsequent studies of a similar nature failed to produce corroborating results (Fleming and Anttonen, 1970; Gozali and Meyer, 1970; Haberman, 1970; Jose and Cody, 1971).

However, perceived examiner attitudes and social stereotypes are still believed to be paramount factors influencing the results of tests and the learning process itself. In a more recent study, Rist (1970) reported the observations of an all black kindergarten class of pupils who were followed up over a period of two and a half years. It was found that the organization of the original kindergarten intake of children into reading groups was largely determined by subjectively interpreted characteristics of the students, and that the composition of the various groups within the class resembled that of the social class structure of the larger society. Rist stated that placement in one or another of the reading groups in kindergarten was more related to the teacher's perceptions of social stereotypes than to the actual achievement levels. The teacher served as the agent of the larger society to ensure that proper "social distance" was maintained between the various strata of the society represented by the children (p. 444). The picture that emerges from this study is one in which "the school strongly shares in the complicity of maintaining the organizational perpetuation of poverty and unequal opportunity. This, of course, is in contrast to the formal doctrine of education in this country to ameliorate rather than aggravate the condition of the poor" (p. 447).

It is clear, then, that test results can serve to reinforce social roles, and to trap poor and minority students in a vicious circle when they are placed in a class of poor performers at the very beginning of their educational career. Stigmatized as a "slow learner," the minority student behaves accordingly, thus reinforcing his low score and his teacher's expectations, often determined on the basis of one inappropriate test. Instead of progressing, he steadily falls further and further below his peers; defeatism replaces faith and hope; motivation disappears and stigmatization leaves its indelible mark on the black child's self-esteem and self-concept. Doomed from the very beginning to an inferior education, he usually drops out of school to accept his role in the larger society--employment as an unskilled worker, or possiby, a life dependency on public welfare.

The Effects of Language Differences on Test Results

Every debate has at least two sides. So it is with the controversy concerning the effects of differences of language on the test results of minority students in general, and blacks in particular. On the one hand, there are those (Bernstein, Bereiter,Engelman) who subscribe to a theory of "cultural deprivation" as the main cause of the relatively low performance of lower-class students on academic tasks. The basic assumption underlying the "cultural deprivation" theory, or what is sometimes referred to as the "deficit model" (Baratz and Baratz, 1970), is that black children live in impoverished environments characterized by over-crowded homes often lacking in adequate sanitary facilities, dilapidated buildings and unaesthetic surroundings, a lack of objects, books, toys, furniture, etc., and are subjected to conditions which seriously limit and impair growth and verbal facility.

Deutsch (1967) claims that, although noise is a characteristic of the lower-class environment, it is not meaningfully related to the child himself. His auditory discrimination--which Deutsch found to

be related to reading ability--is, thus, markedly diminished. Moreover, Hess, Shipman et al (1968) related the child's poor ability to conceptualize abstractly to maternal language style, and found a correlation between mother's language abstraction and the child's subsequent intellectual performance (p. 168). It is the contention of the "cultural deprivation" theorists that the lower-class environment does not equip the preschool child with that essential training or conditioning conducive to learning and success in school. Handicapped before he reaches school, the disadvantaged child falls victim to the "cumulative deficit" phenomenon as he progresses through school. What is necessary, therefore, is early intervention through well structured programs designed to reduce the invidious influence of the ghetto conditions (Gray and Klaus, 1965).

On the other hand, William Labov (1971) and Baratz and Baratz (1970)strongly disagree with an interpretation of differences between black children and their white middle-class peers which places primary value on middle-class norms of behavior and denies black language and culture. These writers see the "cultural deprivation" theory as "unrealistic in terms of current linguistic and anthropological data and, at worst, ethnocentric and racist" (Baratz and Baratz, 1970, p.30).

Labov categorically refutes the deficit theory which advances verbal and sensory deprivation as the cause of low achievement in school. Such a notion, he feels, places the blame on the child for poor performance, absolves the school, and results from the work of educational psychologists "who know very little about language and even less about black children" (Labov, 1971, p. 59). Contrary to Deutsch and Bereiter, Labov finds that ghetto children are subjected to a great deal of verbal stimulation, possess the same basic vocabulary as middle-class children, the same capacity for conceptual learning and use the same logic as any other speaker of English. He demonstrates in his research report that the ineptitude, bashfulness, and monosyllabic behavior of the black child in school represent a form of response to a threatening situation since, when the same child is at ease and operating within his own frame of reference, he is extremely verbal, assertive, and capable of dealing with complex and abstract formulations expressed in a different idiom from that of standard English. Labov and his associates have been accused of romanticizing black English. Many educators feel strongly that such a position is unrealistic in terms of the essential needs of education in the society at large.

However, the main point of the argument is that education of the black ghetto child can only proceed from a proper understanding of the individual within hi own linguistic and cultural milieu so that emphasis is placed on a bi-cultural or bi-lingual perspective rather than on one which stresses the rightness of standard English and standard middle-class norms. Labov admits that there exist black English speakers who are developmentally immature in thinking process, but, on the other hand, he points to the multitude of non-standard English speakers who can and do express themselves in a black idiom and at a level of abstraction which connotes a high capacity for logical thought. There is, thus, an urgent need to distinguish between those two speakers in order to prescribe the right kind of education matched to the individual needs of the individual child. Labov calls for the teaching of standard English to black ghetto children in a manner similar to the teaching of English to a non-native student — teaching English as a foreign language. Thus, the responsibility falls upon both the teacher and the school to develop instruments matched to the child's language and thought and to provide the right social climate which will transform the seemingly monosyllabic, inept, and ignorant child into the fluent and able user of the English language.

If Labov and the Baratzes are right, then it follows that standardized IQ tests do not, and cannot as they presently exist, measure the true potential of black children whose language and life styles are largely determined by the conditions of the ghetto. For such tests depend heavily on vocabulary and language usage which place the minority child at a distinct disadvantage.

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Guidelines, Trends, and Alternatives: A Summary

The attacks upon testing described in the previous sections of this paper may result in an expansion and elaboration of psychometrics rather than in an abolition of objective tests. Changes are mandatory if the makers and users of tests are to discharge their functions responsibly. The likelihood of the direction of such changes can be seen in at least six categories of responses to the exposure of the limitations of the use of standardized tests with minority students in particular and with the general application of tests to the education of any student. Those categories can, in turn, be dichotomized into two major trends: Namely, one that seeks to retain the concepts of aptitude or fitness to perform in future situations from the results on a standardized set of behavioral tasks; and the other, that emphasizes the purposes and goals of testing as essentially descriptive and prescriptive leading from an analysis of functional levels and cognitive styles to the prescription of learning experiences matched to the individual needs of each student.

The first general trend is illustrated by the response of the majority of test producers to the charge that testing serves to keep minority groups in a relatively inequitable educational situation, to label as educationally or mentally retarded many who are able to do normal work in a setting suited to their needs, and to act as the gate-keeping function to the avenues of higher education by unfairly depressing true potential of minority students through comparison with middle-class norms. Test producers have claimed that tests have been misused because of the misconceptions of counselors, teachers, admission officers, and administrators. They claim that those who use the tests should be aware of the meaning of the results and should not interpret the scores on IQ tests as implying permanent, innate, or irremediable deficiency. For the scores merely indicate the degree of the individual's atypical level of function. They point up the unfairness of life — not the unfairness of the test. Thus, it is the job of the school to gear instruction to the special needs of the student and to bring him up to par. Such a stance predicates a certain standard of behavioral responses and emphasizes the fact that IQ tests are predictors of future achievement, and that the school does exist as a middle-class institution which trains people to fit into a certain kind of society. Thus, as long as the norms of society remain as they are IQ tests of the individual or group variety do fulfill a necessary and vital function. The need, therefore, is to train the users to ensure that the scores are properly interpreted.

The second trend is somewhat similar to the first in that it emphasizes the need for the training and sensitization of test users in the potentialities of a variety of errors of interpretation due to technical and psychological factors which contaminate test results. Such a position has been enunciated by a Division of APA, the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, (Fishman et al, 1964) in the well-publicized "Guidelines for Testing Minority Group Children". The article deals specifically with three basic critical issues in the testing of minorities — lack of reliable differentiation in the range of minority group scores which tend to cluster at the lower end of the total range; lack of predictive validity when scores are compared with standardization samples of a different sociocultural background; emphasis on adequate understanding of sociocultural background of the group being tested in order to make a true interpretation of scores. Fishman and his associates call for a thorough re-examination of the "use of tests" and retraining of those who administer and interpret tests. In addition, they suggest certain modifications in the structure of existing tests, and in the procedures and test-taking situations; but the main burden of their recommendations is upon the need to interpret test results with the understanding that there exist variables extraneous to test content, that contaminate them. It is the opinion of those workers that tests continue to be used as a means of judging the performance of the minority child with that of advantaged white middle-class children in order to determine "the magnitude of the deprivation to be overcome" (Passow, 1967, p. 168). The essential philosophy of the "Guidelines" follows the lines of the cultural deprivation theory or deficit model whereby tests are seen as gauging the success of the student in overcoming the deficiencies which an unfair social system has forced upon him.

The third trend represents a focus upon measures of the environment to bolster and supplement the scores from traditional intelligence tests. The essential thesis rests in the proposition that "the addition of a measure of the environment greatly enhances the estimation of academic achievement" (Wolf, 1964, p. 102). It has been empirically demonstrated that the measurement of what parents do in the home can be used to predict school achievement with a fairly high degree of accuracy (Bloom, 1964; Wolf, 1964). Thus, by combining measures of the individual's environment with measures of his performance on standardized tests of intelligence, and employing methods of multiple correlation, it is possible to raise the coefficient of correlation to .87 which is practically the upper limit of such

a correlation when the reliability of the instruments used is taken into account. Measurement of the environment, therefore, implies better indices of prediction and provides useful information for the development of "new curricula designed to help overcome identified environmental deficiences among students. Useful information about the ingredients for programs of compensatory education could be obtained from careful examination of the environmental measures" (Wolf, 1964, p. 103). As in the studies and interpretation of minority pupils' test results, throughout almost all of the 1960's there is a tacit and underlying acceptance of the deficit model and of the emphasis upon the environment as the principal factor in determining the deprived state of the minority person. Spawned in the period of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, such positions typify the drive to right the balance and furnish the enrichment necessary to ameliorate the "cultural disadvantage" of an impoverished environment. Essentially, Wolf holds that since the development of the particular individual's characteristics is greatly influenced by environmental variables, one can discover how particular traits are learned, maintained, or altered systematically relating data about the individual to data about the environment.

The fourth trend, espoused particularly by Jane Mercer and her associates at Riverside, California, calls for a "pluralistic sociocultural" perspective on the testing of minorities. Such a position is consistent with the modified use of standardized measures of IQ but requires that "a culturally aware pluralistic interpretation would thus evaluate the intelligence of each person only in relation to others who have come from similar sociocultural backgrounds and who have had approximately the same opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills to answer questions on an intelligence test designed for an Anglo-American society" (Mercer, 1971, p. 335).

The fifth trend represents a departure from traditional testing and involves the development of new measures consistent with the special language characteristics of minority individuals. This movement runs counter to that implied by the cultural deprivation or deficit model which postulates that black children fail to learn appropriately at school because they have certain developmental or maturational deficits in the areas of language, learning set, attitudes, and capacity for logical thought. Labov and the Baratzes take the position that standardized tests are, by their very nature, biased against black and other minority children and therefore make normally intelligent children look stupid when their scores are compared with white middle-class children. Although they stress a linguistic or anthropological frame of reference, this school of thought has vital implications for measurement. Those researchers hold that 1) tests which make use of standard English can only judge the abilities of those individuals who have been accustomed to using standard English; 2) the verbal-deprivation theory is bolstered by the fallacious use and interpretation of traditional tests of mental ability; 3) there is no reason to believe that any nonstandard vernacular is, in itself, an obstacle to learning; 4) the frequently monosyllabic verbal expression of black and lower class children in the school represents a form of response to a formal and threatening situation rather than a lack of verbal capacity or verbal deficit; 5) evidence of the use of formal speech patterns does not necessarily coincide with logical thought; and, 6) so long as we continue to use traditional standardized measures of mental ability with minorities and to explain the atypical results on the basis of a verbal deprivation theory, we will continue to rationalize the failure of the school and the educational system in terms of the personal deficiencies of the individual. Such a notion implies the development of new measures matched to the langauge style and vernacular of the individual while ensuring that the circumstances of testing are such that the minority child feels free to respond without anxiety or emotional threat. It is difficult to see how such tests can be designed in the vernacular of black English in written form, but what Labov stresses is the need to look at the logic of the child's expression in the language and form that are consistent with his sociocultural background and not merely to make judgments based on his capacity to use standard English which may only reflect the ability to be verbose rather than to think logically and precisely. No doubt, tests of standard English will be necessary in the provision of the proper climate for optimum instruction but such test results cannot provide any true estimate of the minority child's verbal capacity or his ability to conceptualize.

The sixth trend signifies a culmination of several schools of thought and theories related to the measurement and education of minorities. It calls for an emphasis on description and prescription rather than on selection and prediction in order to facilitate equal educational opportunities (Gordon, 1971). Such a position radically departs from traditional testing particularly in the purposes of psychometrics since it focuses, essentially, on the descriptive, diagnostic, and qualitative analysis of behavioral function. It represents an integration and extension of several theoretical positions and the application of research findings to the education of minorities.

Moreover, it represents an extension of educational opportunity for the mass of citizens through individualized prescriptive educational planning. Thus, instead of seeking to abolish tests, this trend regards psychometrics as a fundamental means by which we can begin to make education more accessible to the underprivileged elements of society without penalizing the individual for not belonging to the middle-class mainstream culture. The primary objective of testing becomes not just one of discovering where the individual is on a scale of attainment, or of estimating his chances of success on a particular course of study, but it consists of diagnosing in some detail what he can and cannot do so as to plan those strategies which will optimize learning. It further recognizes that in order to gear instruction to individual needs, something must be known about the verbal and cognitive style of the child. By testing within the context of the individual's linguistic frame of reference, we can gauge the level and quality of his intellectual functioning and that of his academic attainment. But judgments of mental capacity must take into account such factors as health and nutritional status,as well as the social and cultural environmental factors impinging upon academic and social development. Such a trend also implies an extension of existing tests whereby patterns of achievement in any given subject area provide qualitative descriptions or profiles in terms of the strength of skill or knowledge and an account of those particular gaps or weaknesses towards which instruction should be focused. Thus, test procedures would be directed towards the broadening of the varieties of competencies and skills, not merely through objective item-types, but additionally, through open-ended probes designed to incorporate atypical patterns and varieties of learning. Such a trend also seeks to incorporate the work of David McClelland within the corpus of psychometric technology by stressing measures of ego development and motivation which depend upon operant (of free associative) thought patterns in assessing non-academic learning such as social competence, coping skills, political and avocational skills.

In the final analysis, we need to look at our purposes for testing. If testing is to serve a selective and sorting function, and if, indeed, psychometric technology is intended to preserve an elite, then it follows that traditional procedures for measuring intelligence and scholastic aptitude, tied to a set of middle- class ethnocentric norms, will serve that function very well. However, if it is our purpose to serve the mass of citizens, and if it is our goal to make measurement more facilitative for the education of the poor, of the minority student, and of the atypical individual, then we will need to expand our research endeavours so that psychometric technology becomes the handmaiden of educational innovation in optimizing the individual's competence. Through the qualitative analysis of achievement and weaknesses, we can point the way towards the modification of patterns of instruction which will match the individual needs of individual students. It is therefore the hope of such a philosophy of testing to contribute to the achievement of optimal developmental and educaional opportunity for all.

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